

Message Text

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IO:JABAKER (DRAFT)

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY DACCA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 262014

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UN, BG, IN

SUBJECT: FARAKKA BARRAGE

REF: STATE 243458; USUN 4199; COLOMBO 3714; DACCA 5153
NEW DELHI 14585

1. DEPARTMENT APPRECIATES THOUGHTFUL COMMENTS ON STATE
REFTEL WHICH HAVE BEEN USEFUL IN CLARIFYING OUR
THINKING ON FARAKKA PROBLEM. OUR CONCLUSION IS THAT
WE SHOULD NOT PROCEED. WE NOTE THAT THERE IS LITTLE
ENTHUSIASM FOR THE PROPOSAL AND CONSIDERABLE CONCERN
THAT THE U.S. HAND WOULD BECOME KNOWN WITH ADVERSE
EFFECTS BOTH ON THE PROPOSED INITIATIVE AND OUR
BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH INDIA AND BANGLADESH. WHILE
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USUN SUGGESTION THAT WE WORK THROUGH BRITISH WOULD

PUT GREATER DISTANCE BETWEEN U.S. AND INITIATIVE,
INEVITABLE CLOSE BRITISH COORDINATION WITH EC-9
COLLEAGUES WOULD RAISE THE LIKELIHOOD THAT U.S. WOULD
QUICKLY BE IDENTIFIED AS SOURCE OF PROPOSAL.

2. IN ANY CASE, OUR IDEA IS UNNECESSARY SINCE WE
NOW KNOW THAT IBRD ON ITS OWN HAS DECIDED TO UNDERTAKE
THE TYPE OF BEHIND-SCENES ROLE WE WERE THINKING OF
SUGGESTING. IN ADDITION TO WORD RECEIVED FROM
BANK REP IN BANGLADESH (DACCA 5365), IBRD HEADQUARTERS

HAS TOLD DEPARTMENT ON CONFIDENTIAL BASIS THAT
MCNAMARA WILL TAKE UP FARAKKA WHEN HE VISITS
BANGLADESH AND INDIA IN EARLY NOVEMBER. IBRD FEELS
THAT THE TWO SIDES ARE NOT VERY FAR APART IN TERMS
OF THE NUMBERS ON A POSSIBLE NEW INTERIM ARRANGEMENT
ON SHARING OF GANGES WATER. IT HOPES THAT CARROT IN
FORM OF IBRD-FUNDED COMPREHENSIVE STUDY OF BROAD
EASTERN WATERS SCHEME MAY HELP INDUCE DELHI AND DACCA
TO AGREE ON NEW INTERIM ARRANGEMENT. (IBRD ASKS THAT
WE HOLD THIS INFORMATION EXTREMELY CLOSE, ESPECIALLY
IN DACCA AND DELHI. THEY ARE CONCERNED THAT PROSPECTS
FOR SUCCESS WILL BE SHARPLY REDUCED IF THERE IS TOO
MUCH DISCUSSION OF IBRD INITIATIVE. POSTS SHOULD
THEREFORE NOT DISCUSS BANK PLANS AT THIS TIME.)

3. IN RESPONDING TO INQUIRIES ON FARAKKA, ADDRESSEES
SHOULD TAKE THE LINE THAT USG IS NOT TAKING A
POSITION ON THE SUBSTANCE OF THE QUESTION, BUT
HOPES THAT THE TWO SIDES CAN RESOLVE THE PROBLEM
IN A MUTUALLY SATISFACTORY MANNER.

WE
THINK THAT ANY RESOLUTION THAT IS LIKELY TO GAIN
WIDE SUPPORT IN THE SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE WILL
BE ONE ACCEPTABLE TO BOTH INDIA AND BANGLADESH. IF
SUCH A CONSENSUS RESOLUTION EMERGES, WE ARE OF COURSE
PREPARED TO SUPPORT IT.

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